



**TENNESSEE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
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**November 18, 2005  
Board of Commissioner's Meeting  
Minutes**

**Commissioner's Present:**

Commissioner Garrett  
Commissioner Hakeem  
Commissioner Hodge (via Phone)  
Commissioner Pierce  
Commissioner Pride (via Phone)  
Commissioner Rogers (via Phone)  
Commissioner Smith  
Commissioner Todd  
Commissioner Walker  
Chairman Wiggins

**Commissioner's Absent:**

Commissioner Horne  
Commissioner Jones  
Commissioner Kyles

**Staff Present:**

Amber D. Gooding, Executive Director  
Antonio Adams, Deputy Director  
Shay Rose, General Counsel  
Robert Bright, Housing Director  
Cynthia Howard, Communications Officer  
Lisa Lancaster, Executive Director's Assistant

**Guests: None**

Jennifer McClendon-State Audit  
Suzanne Sawyer-State Audit

**Call to Order & Invocation**

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Commissioner Walker offered the invocation.

**Minutes & Roll Call**

The minutes of the September 30, 2005, board meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Smith made a motion to accept the minutes. Commissioner Todd seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed. Roll call was taken.

**Announcements**

Executive Director Amber Gooding informed the board that the scheduled Audit has begun and introduced Jennifer McClendon and Suzanne Sawyer from State Audit. It was announced that Barbara Gardener has joined THRC as an investigator in the Chattanooga Office. She comes to THRC from DHS and TVA and has been with state government for 20 years.

The Executive Director noted that a draft of the letter to the Department of Personnel from the Commission regarding Workplace Harassment issues would be emailed to commissioners in the near future.

### **Employment Case Report**

Deputy Director Antonio Adams reported on the employment cases (report attached). Five hundred twenty five cases have been investigated and compensated for the period October 1, 2004 – September 30, 2005. It was noted that cases mediated have resulted in \$46,512 in settlements. Twenty-two additional cases are set for mediation.

### **Housing Case Report**

Housing Director, Robert Bright reported on the housing cases (report attached). Eleven housing cases have been closed since the last reporting and race is still the number one bases for housing complaints received. The goal for next fiscal year is 100 cases and currently 67 cases have been received.

### **Outreach & Education**

Communications officer, Cynthia Howard gave an overview of the October 4<sup>th</sup> Employment Law Conference. There were 147 attendees from across the state. Executive Director Gooding thanked the Communications division staff for an excellent Conference.

She noted that the agency has been awarded an Outreach and Education HUD/Hurricane Katrina grant in the amount of \$170,000. An additional \$150,000 proposal to partner with West Tennessee Legal Services to assist Hurricane Katrina victims with housing has been submitted.

Ms. Howard then gave a brief version of the Agency's Annual report and noted that the complete report will be mailed to Commissioners when printing is complete and emailed.

### **Cause Case Report**

Shay Rose, General Counsel updated the Board on cause cases. The 7 employment and 13 housing cases report covered discrimination based on race, disability, age, religion, regarded-as disabled, familial status and breach of conciliation. It was noted that the Davidson county venue bill that was passed last legislative session is working very well for the commission.

Director Gooding announced that arrangements are being made to fill the vacant Attorney II position in the Legal Department. Thanks were offered to Shay Rose, General Counsel and Antonio Adams, Deputy Director for filling the need to assist in reviewing cases over the last several months that this position has been vacant.

It was announced that the next Board meeting would be January 27, 2006. Chairman Wiggins announced that Commissioner Pierce has been nominated to chair the By Laws committee. Commissioner Garrett made a motion to accept the nomination. Commissioner Todd seconded the motion.

With no further business to address, Chairman Wiggins offered Holiday wishes to the board and adjourned the meeting at 10:10 am.